

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph Page 7, paragraph beginning on line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

C The step 130 includes a toehold portion 131 and a base portion 132 having a width W. The width W is chosen to prevent the step 130 from tipping over when used as a toehold/slide guard. In preferred embodiments, the width W is approximately 8 inches. The width W of the connecting material is approximately 10 inches to approximately 30 inches wide. The toehold portion 131 is defined by an upper generally planar support surface 131a for engaging a portion of a user's foot, an opposing lower planar surface 131b, and a planar edge surface 131c extending therebetween. As shown in FIG. 7, the upper generally planar support surface 131a is disposed substantially perpendicular to the base portion 132. More preferably still, the step 130 may be comprised of an textured plastic, which has been shown to provide surprisingly good traction, especially when sneakers are worn.